

Theatre. Cinema. Community.

WELCOME

TO THE

DUKES

Chief Executive

Recruitment Pack

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CONTENTS

Pg 3 - Welcome from our Chair

Pg 5 - About Us and Lancaster

Pg 7 - The Team

Pg 9 - The Role

Pg 13- Terms and How to apply



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WELCOME

On behalf of the board, thank you for your interest in the role of Chief Executive.

The Dukes is Lancashire's leading centre for live performance, film and creative engagement. For over fifty years, we have built a reputation as an inclusive, creative space in the heart of Lancaster city centre. Our live performance programme including our annual Play in the Park and year-round independent film programme both draw audiences from across Lancashire county and further afield. Our three auditorium spaces are bustling with activity, we provide a huge range of community engagement projects, and throughout the year you'll find the Dukes animating parks, streets, festivals, schools, community centres and more. We are an organisation that runs on partnerships and collaborations. There is no such thing as a quiet day at the Dukes!

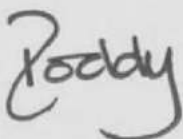
As well as being a vital cultural contributor, the Dukes plays an important role in the economic and social health of the city. With the advent of the Eden Project North in three years' time, the visitor economy is only set to grow and the Dukes is well placed to play a leading role in expanding the visitor offer.

The organisation has weathered the pandemic well and is successfully rebuilding audiences and finances. We are in good health, with a fantastic and motivated team, and strong support from our stakeholders including Arts Council England and Lancaster City Council.

With the current postholder, Karen O'Neill, leaving to take up a senior role at HOME in Manchester, we are now searching for a dynamic individual to lead our next chapter. Our new Chief Executive will be experienced in the cultural sector and have a passion for increasing and deepening our relationships with audiences and communities. They will think and act strategically and thrive on partnership working. The right person will be able to spot both creative and commercial opportunities and will underpin their drive to make things happen with good business acumen, the ability to make sound decisions and enjoyment of leading and building teams. Most of all, they will be determined to continue to make the Dukes the place of choice for artists, visitors, communities and partners.

If you believe you have these qualities and want the rewards and challenges of leading a busy regional cultural centre, then we'd love to hear from you.

We are open to applications from people who have led organisations before and people with the experience and drive to step up into the CEO role. If you'd like to find out more about the opportunity then I'd really encourage you to have an informal chat with our recruitment consultant, Mary Caws via cawsmary@gmail.com.



Roddy Gauld
Chair

**“The Dukes provides Lancaster with a cultural heart.
I am always inspired, challenged and entertained
and I’m grateful that Lancaster has such a great place
where I can enjoy the arts.”**

- Audience Member



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ABOUT US

The Dukes was founded in 1971 as the only producing theatre in Lancashire, and has evolved into a multi artform cultural centre that offers high quality live performance and cinema, creative engagement, and amazing audience experience. We welcome over 70,000 audiences each year and work with 10,000 people to explore their creativity and participate in creative programmes.

The Dukes is the largest independent cultural provider in the City of Lancaster, in terms of audiences, artistic delivery, reach and footprint. We are one of four Arts Council NPOs in the local area and we are a core member of the Lancaster Arts Partners, and a steering group member of Arts Lancashire.

The Dukes Playhouse Trust, which is a registered charity, manages the Dukes and company limited by guarantee and is core funded by Arts Council of England and Lancaster City Council. This accounts for approximately 25% of turnover (2022-23). Earned income is generated through box office, room hire, and fees, and projects are supported by grants, individual giving and corporate sponsorship.

The Venue - The Dukes has two core performance spaces, The Rake and The Round. The Rake is a traditional end on theatre and cinema space seating 313, whilst The Round is a unique purpose built in the round theatre space with 234 seats. Both spaces are used for both live performance and cinema. Additionally, the Dukes has recently developed its former creative learning building into MoorSpace, a venue focused on creative engagement and hosting small-scale contemporary theatre focused on emerging and solo artists.

One of our future priorities is to renew and modernise our buildings. An important long-term consideration is the development of the Canal Quarter around the Dukes, and the potential shift in the city centre from retail to visitor and cultural experiences. In 2023 it was announced that the Eden Project Morecambe had been awarded £50million of funding from the Government, this is a ground-breaking and exciting development for the area which will only serve to enhance our area and create a wealth of new opportunities.

The Programme - The Dukes is Lancashire's only producing theatre with a 'Homegrown' Christmas performance and Play in the Park at Williamson Park. As a presenting theatre and independent cinema, the programme includes drama, dance, family theatre, comedy, and a range of film from across the world. Our programme is diverse, multi artform and focused on high quality creative delivery.

We also work in co production/in association to create work with artists and support talent development. We have established a consistent programme of professional development for artists and creative professionals. We support and facilitate the creation of creative careers through the provision of commissions, residences, programmes, paid work, match funding and in-kind support. Our spaces are used to support artists and create new conversations with our audiences and community.

Our engagement work is presented in six strands: early years, young people, older people, hard to reach, talent development and schools. We offer distinct and inclusive participatory opportunities for all ages within the community as well as with other partner charities and organisations. Recognising that there are barriers preventing all ages from engaging with the arts we aspire to ensure our programme is accessible to all.

ABOUT LANCASTER

The Dukes is in the heart of Lancaster, one of the core cities in Lancashire (pop. 1.17 million). Lancaster is a thriving small city to live and work in. It's fascinating heritage and stunning architecture make an impressive setting, with the Castle and Ashton Memorial dominating the skyline whilst cobbled streets and secret lanes offer character to explore. The city is well known for its independent shops, restaurants and pubs.

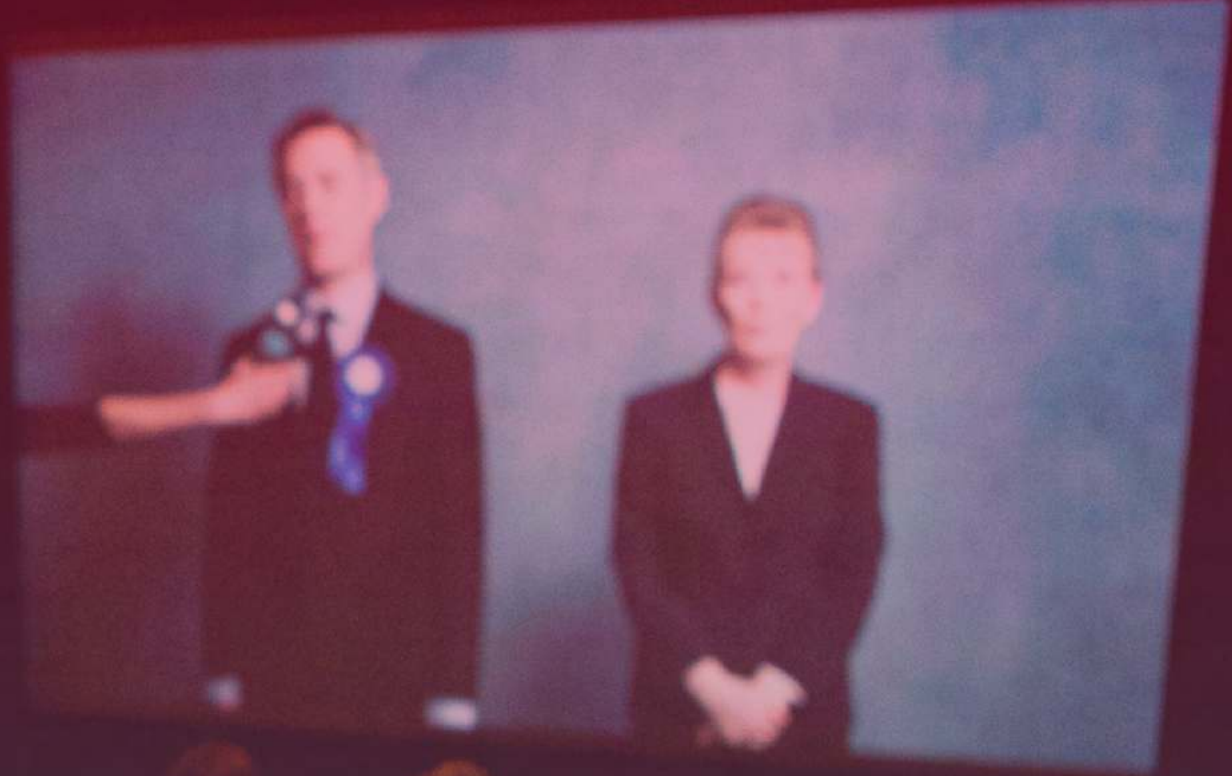
With a cultural offer that exceeds other places its size, there is a huge range of festivals and events throughout the year including Light Up Lancaster, Lancaster Jazz Festival, Lancaster Music Festival and Lancaster Literature Festival. Other venues include The Grand Theatre and Lancaster Arts at the University. There are numerous local museums and heritage attractions. The Storey offers a home for creative industries and there is a vibrant creative economy.

The City of Lancaster district includes the towns of Morecambe, Heysham and Carnforth and the surrounding rural areas. The city's strapline of City, Country, Coast reflects the rich natural environment of the district. There are excellent travel connections, with both Manchester and the Lake District being less than an hour away by car or train. Lancaster University has a high national and international reputation. It adds significantly to the city and draws people from around the world. The Eden Project North in Morecambe is expected to further add to the area's appeal to visitors from the UK and beyond.

The average house price is £208k, making the city an affordable place to live with a rich quality of life. Several Lancaster state schools have recently been ranked in the top 10 in the North West by The Times.



The stunning Lancaster & Morecambe Bay, city, coastline, Lake District.



“Cracking Little Cinema.”

- Audience Member

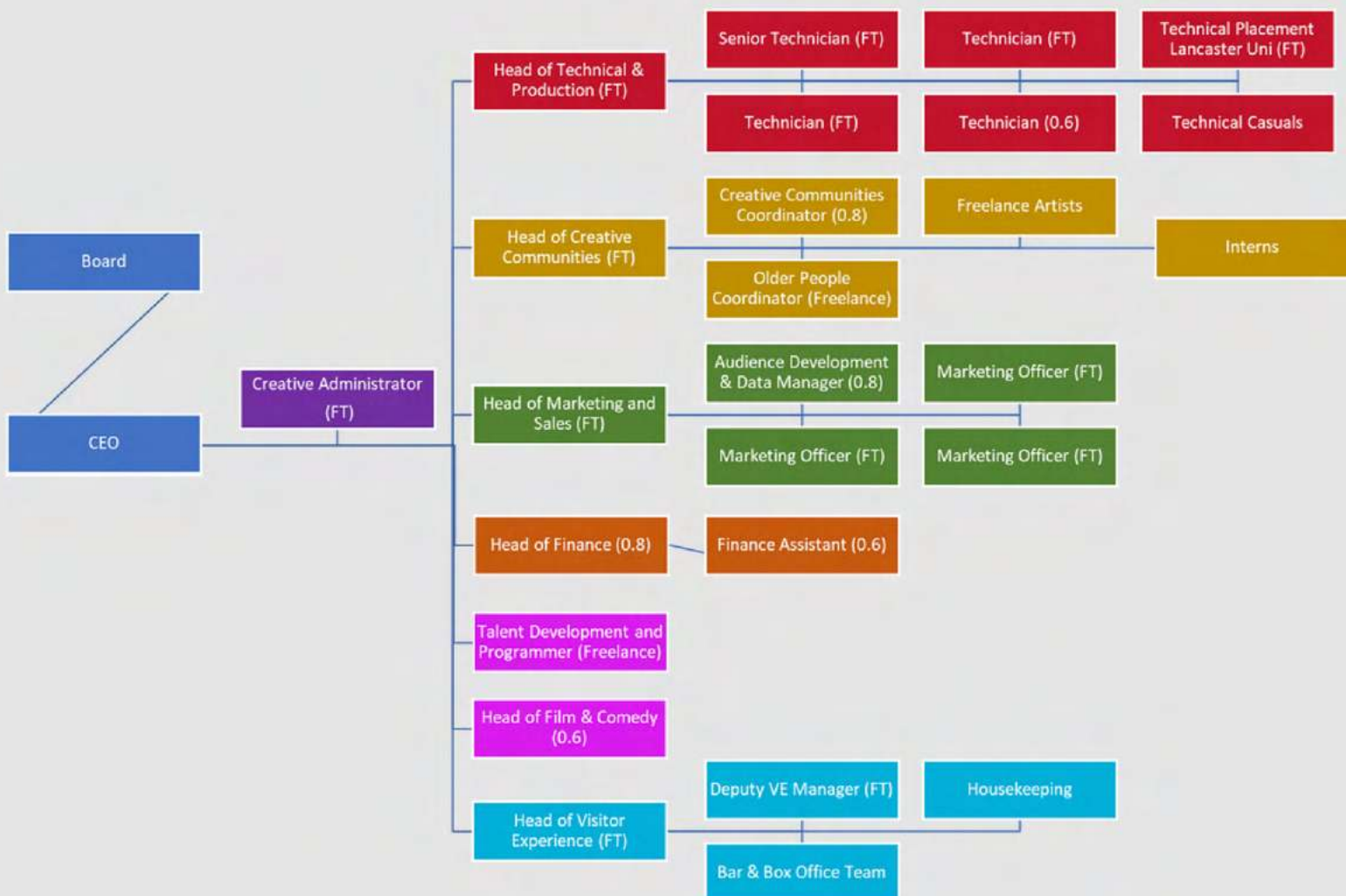
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THE TEAM

Staff are organised by departments:

- Programming, Marketing & Communications
- Creative Communities
- Technical
- Visitor Experience and Finance

The Dukes currently employs 14 full-time, 8 part-time/freelance and a team of casual staff. Additionally the Dukes has over 60 volunteers who donate their time and skills.



Windrush Workshops



Prime Time



School Partnerships



“We have always enjoyed a great partnership with The Dukes, allowing our children to see excellent live theatre, and giving them invaluable enrichment opportunities within our thriving local community.”

- Partner School

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THE ROLE

Job title: Chief Executive

Responsible to: Chair and Board of Trustees


Responsible for: Heads of Departments and Creative Administrator

Role overview

The Chief Executive works with the board to set strategic objectives and is responsible for the operational leadership and delivery of those objectives. This includes delivering creative and commercial plans, securing and managing resources, and working with a range of external stakeholders to develop opportunities and forge partnerships. The Chief Executive will position the Dukes as a leading cultural centre for Lancaster and Lancashire.

The role works with and reports to the Chair and the Board of Trustees and works with a leadership team of departmental heads. There are approximately 20 FT/PT staff, 60 volunteers and a cohort of freelancers.

Key responsibilities

- Work with the Board and staff to develop the strategic objectives of the Dukes and prepare business plans and budgets to achieve these objectives. Be accountable for the operational implementation and reporting of these plans.
 - Lead the Dukes' brand, audience engagement and creative programmes. Ensure these are aligned and provide a diverse, exciting, and relevant offer to audiences and communities across our stages, screens and off-site.
 - Set the strategy for the creative programme: working with the programming and creative engagement teams to curate and evaluate excellent programmes, productions and commissions.
 - Ensure an audience focused culture: placing brilliant visitor experience, evidence-based decisions, and diverse audience development at the heart of the organisation.
 - Lead all staff, volunteers and freelancers in a positive, healthy working environment that enables everyone to achieve their potential. Ensure policies and systems for people management are in place, and that these reflect our values and meet statutory requirements.
- 

- Plan and manage organisational finances, working closely with the Head of Finance and the board to provide proactive decision making and long-term sustainability.
- Lead proactive income generation through sales and commercial opportunities, and through coherent fundraising strategies (donations, sponsorship and grants). This will include leading relationships with funders, identifying opportunities, submitting proposals and reporting outcomes.
- Work with colleagues to manage a range of partnerships that deliver our strategic objectives. These may include local and national creative, social and civic partners. Ensure a culture of strong partnership working and collaboration, and effective governance of partnership projects.
- Represent the organisation in a range of settings and networks, with the media and in the community. Identify strategic opportunities and advocate with evidence about the impact of the Dukes. Be accountable for the Dukes' reputational management.
- Lead the continuous improvement of our facilities (physical and digital). This includes developing options and resources for renewal and delivering improvement projects.
- Ensure that environmental responsibility is embedded across the organisation and acted upon, with ongoing reductions in environment impact.
- Work with the Chair and board to ensure effective governance. This includes providing information for decisions; agreeing objectives and reporting/evaluating progress; monitoring funder requirements; and managing compliance with company policy and statutory requirements.
- Be accountable for health and safety, safeguarding, licensing and other statutory responsibilities, and establish necessary policies and risk assessments throughout the organisation.



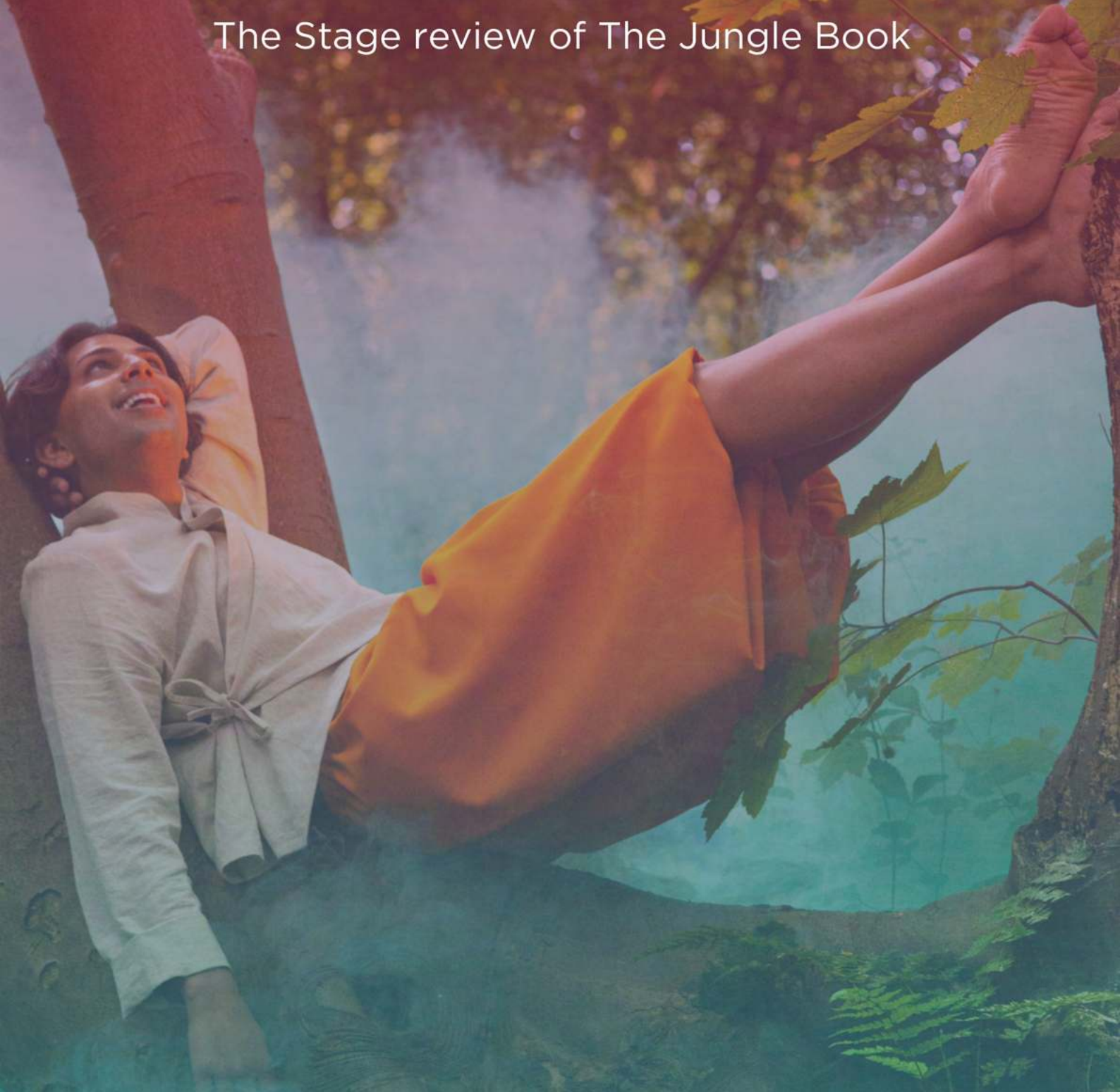
	Essential We're ideally looking for someone who:	Desirable It would also be good if the candidate:
Has experience of:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several years either leading a small organisation or in a senior role in a medium to large-scale cultural organisation • Forging and growing partnerships and external relationships • Working with and enabling creative colleagues and partners • Leading and managing teams of people to achieve results 	
Has skills and attributes in:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing stakeholder relationships, including beyond the cultural sector • Strategy development including articulating proposals to others • Income generation through sales and/or fundraising; able to spot, assess and follow through opportunities • Financial acumen including setting and controlling budgets and targets, and assessing risks • Using research and data insights to make evidence based decisions • Reporting outcomes and results to a range of internal and external stakeholders • Effective advocacy, communication and negotiation skills in a range of situations • Using own initiative, being self-motivated and self-organised including when balancing multiple priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue operations and statutory responsibilities • Programming and producing live performance • Audience development for cinema or live performance
Has knowledge and understanding of:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK cultural funding system, policies and processes • UK performing arts and/or cinema sectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management or leadership at degree or postgraduate level • Working directly with a board and good practice in governance
Is committed to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in, with and for Lancaster's communities • Inclusion and diversity • Addressing climate change • Creating outstanding experiences for artists, audiences and workers 	





**"High energy storytelling
drives the strongest park show
for many years!"**

The Stage review of The Jungle Book



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Terms & Conditions

Salary:	£50,000 to £60,000 (depending on experience)
Contract:	Permanent, full-time
Hours:	39 hours per week including evenings and weekends as required
Probation:	Six months
Place of work:	The Dukes, Lancaster. Some hybrid working can be included.
Travel:	Some local and national travel, as required.

Employee benefits:

- 28 days annual leave per year including bank holidays
- A defined matched contribution pension scheme (4%)
- Complimentary tickets and discounts on food and drink

There will be a six month probationary period and any offer of employment will be subject to:

- References that are satisfactory to the Dukes
- Evidence of the right to work in the UK as defined by the Home Office
- A valid DBS check when working with young people

This role has a responsibility to ensure that The Dukes serves the communities of Lancaster and Lancashire. We therefore expect that the Chief Executive to live in, or be willing to relocate to, the area. We are happy to discuss this further with the successful candidate.

We are open to receiving applications for flexible working and job-share arrangements.



How to apply

Appointment process

We are working with Mary Caws to support our recruitment and she can be contacted via cawsmary@gmail.com for an informal conversation about the role.

Applications can be made by submitting a CV and letter (no longer than two pages A4) to cawsmary@gmail.com no later than midday on Tuesday 26 September.

If you require any information or need to make your application in a different format, please contact us via the email address above or 01524 598500.

We expect interviews will take place in Lancaster on 12th and 25th October.

The Dukes recognises, respects and values individual difference. We are committed to the wellbeing of our staff and to being an Equal Opportunities employer and attracting diverse talent from sections of the community currently underrepresented in the culture sector to help us to develop a more diverse workforce. Ensuring that our leadership reflects the diversity of the communities that we serve is an important part of our ethos, and so we're particularly keen to hear from people from a cultural and ethnically diverse background, from d/Deaf & Disabled people and from all of those who are under-represented in the cultural sector.





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